

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 PM-04 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

USIA-15 PRS-01 SSM-05 L-03 EB-07 FEAE-00 COME-00

TRSE-00 OMB-01 /085 W
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P 291149Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3251

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 6697

E.O.O 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG

SUBJECT: ISRAELI ACTIONS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ

REF: TEL AVIV 6662

1. THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER THE WEEKLY CABINET MEETING (HELD SEPT 28 INSTEAD OF SEPT 26 BECAUSE OF THE NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY) CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH: "IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY MINISTER KOL CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF A MEMORANDUM BY THE LEGAL ADVISER OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN DRILLING COMPANY 'AMOCO' AND THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT, THE PRIME MINISTER REPLIED THAT WHAT WAS LEAKED WAS THE CONENT OF A LEGAL OPINION WHICH CONTAINS NOTHING NEW OR SECRET, ALTHOUGH IT IS AN ADDITIONAL CASE OF A REGRETTABLE LEAK. THE PRIME MINISTER DID NOT DEAL WITH THE CONTENT OF THE OPINIO."

2. THE LEAK OF THE SECRET MEMORANDUM AND THE CABINE'S COMMUNIQUE ON THIS SUBJECT RECEIVED PROMINENT COVERAGE IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS OF SEPT 29. SEVERAL REPORTS ALLEGED THAT THE LEAK WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEFENSE MINISTER PERES OR OF THOSE CLOSE TO HIM. HOWEVER, "SOURCES CLOSE TO PERES" UNCLASSIFIED

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HAVE FLATLY DENIED THAT HE WAS RESPONSIBLE.

3. WRITING IN THE SEPT 29 HAARETZ MATTI GOLAN (WHOSE STORY IN THE SEPT 28 HAARETZ FIRST PUBLISHED THE ROSENNE MEMO, SEE REFTTEL) CLAIMED THAT SOME CABINET MINISTERS MAINTAIN THAT THE MMORANDUM DID IN FACT CONTAIN "NEW" POINTS, TO THEM AT LEAST. ACCORDING TO GOLAN SEVERAL MINISTERS WERE ANNOYED THAT RABIN HAD NOT SEEN FIT TO BRING THE ROSENNE MEMO TO THEIR ATTENTION AND SAID THAT IN THE FUTURE THEY WOULD SUPPORT PERES' POSITION THAT THE DRILLING DISPUTE SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED DIRECTLY WITH EGYPT.

4. BARNEA, DAVAR'S U.S. CORRESPONDENT, SAID THAT THERE ARE "INDICATIONS THAT...ISRAEL WOULD ALLOW AMOCO...TO DRILL AT A FEW SITES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GULF ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE COMPANY WOULD NOT TRY TO EXPLOIT ITS CONCESSIONS NEARER TO THE EAST SHORE." HE ADDED THAT ANYWAY AMOCO WAS PRESENTLY INTERESTED ONLY IN DRILLING IN MID-GULF. BARNEA CITED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES AS BELIEVING THAT PUBLICATION OF THE ROSENNE MEMO MAY GIVE PROMINENCE TO THE ISSUE AS A SUBJECT IN ALLON'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER, EVEN THOUGH ALLON IS REPORTEDLY NOT KEEN ON DISCUSSING THE DRILLING DISPUTE AT THAT TIME.
TOON

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